

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 078165
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY EA:RHOLBROOKE:KA
APPROVED BY EA:RHOLBROOKE
EA:RBOAKLEY
S/S-O:JTHYDEN

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O 271930Z MAR 78 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE
INFO USLO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 078165

NODIS
FOR NEWSOM FROM HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, RP

SUBJECT: PHILIPPINE BASE NEGOTIATIONS

REF: MANILA 4723

1. AS YOU SEE MARCOS FOR WHAT MAY BE THE LAST TIME, I
HOPE THAT YOU WILL FIND A WAY TO LET HIM KNOW THAT WE
CONSIDER IT UNHELPFUL TO OUR MUTUAL EFFORTS THAT HIS
GOVERNMENT SO FREQUENTLY SEEMS TO BACK OFF POSITIONS THAT
IT HAS ALREADY TAKEN. WE RECOGNIZE THAT HE FACES SOME
DIFFICULT INTERNAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITH HIS OWN
MILITARY AND SOME CIVILIAN OFFICIALS, JUST AS WE FACE SOME
DIFFICULT CONSTRAINTS BECAUSE OF OUR OWN CONGRESSIONAL
REALITIES. BUT IT IS MUCH HARDER TO NEGOTIATE WHEN SOME-
THING ONCE GIVEN IS LATER RETRACTED. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 078165

BEEN SO CAREFUL ABOUT CONSULTING CONGRESS. GOOD EXAMPLES
RECENTLY OF GOP REVERSAL OF POSITION ARE THE QUESTIONS OF
CRIMINAL JURISDICTION AND THE ROLE OF THE BASE COMMANDER.
WE HAVE MADE, AS YOU POINT OUT IN PARA 1(A) OF REFTTEL,
SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS ON A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT ISSUES.
MARCOS HAS SUCCEEDED IN LAYING TO REST UNREALISTIC POSI-
TIONS BY HIS ADVISORS WHICH HAD PREVENTED PRIOR AGREEMENT

ON THESE POINTS. IF HE CONTINUES TO EXERT SUCH LEADERSHIP, OVERALL AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE.

2. IT IS MY PERSONAL VIEW THAT MARCOS IS QUITE SUSCEPTIBLE TO A PRESENTATION THAT COMBINES BOTH AN APPEAL TO HIS STATESMANLIKE QUALITIES (SIC) AND HIS SENSE OF PRIDE THAT HIS COUNTRY IS SERIOUS. YET THE PROCESS THAT HIS GOVERNMENT FOLLOWS IN NEGOTIATING IS PROBABLY LESS SERIOUS THAN THAT OF ALMOST ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT WE HAVE EVER DEALT WITH. MARCOS HAS SHOWN IN THE PAST THAT HE IS WILLING TO OVERRULE HIS SUBORDINATES WHEN APPEALED TO ON THIS BASIS - AS WAS THE CASE IN JANUARY WHEN ROMUALDEZ TRIED TO REOPEN THE QUESTION OF DURATION AFTER IT HAD BEEN SETTLED THE DAY BEFORE.

3. MARCOS SHOULD FEEL THAT HE IS REACHING THE CROSSROADS IN HIS RELATIONS WITH US. WE WANT TO SUPPORT HIM AND HELP HIM. WE BEAR HIM NO HOSTILITY AND WE ARE NOT SUPPORTING HIS POLITICAL ENEMIES. WE ARE ENCOURAGING HIM IN HIS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE PHILIPPINES, BOTH POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY, IN ORDER THAT HIS NORMALIZATION POLICY WILL BE A SUCCESS AT HOME AND LONG-TERM U.S.-PHILIPPINE RELATIONS WILL BE STRENGTHENED. ON HUMAN RIGHTS, WE ARE SEEKING THE SAME GOALS HE HAS PUBLICLY SET FOR HIS OWN COUNTRY. WE HAVE MADE HIM A FAIR OFFER WHICH RESPECTS AND HIGHLIGHTS PHILIPPINE SOVEREIGNTY IN A WAY THAT NO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 078165

PREVIOUS OFFERS EVER DID. THIS SHOULD BE STRESSED. HE IS GETTING A CHANCE FOR A MAJOR PUBLIC EVENT OF GREAT SYMBOLIC AND REAL IMPORTANCE TO HIS PEOPLE -- THE INSTALLATION OF PHILIPPINE BASE COMMANDERS AND THE RAISING OF THE PHILIPPINE FLAG OVER THE ENTIRE REAL ESTATE OF THE BASES. IN RETURN WE RETAIN ESSENTIAL OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF CLEARLY DEFINED FACILITIES AND CERTAIN FUNCTIONS. IT IS A REASONABLE DEAL AND ONE WHICH GOES FAR BEYOND WHAT WAS PREVIOUSLY OFFERED. THUS A SIMPLE COMPARISON OF MONEY OFFERED IN 1976 VERSUS WHAT IS BEING OFFERED TODAY IS HIGHLY MISLEADING -- INDEED EVEN INSULTING TO US, SINCE WE HAVE GONE SO MUCH FURTHER ON THE CRITICAL ISSUES OF SOVEREIGNTY.

4. AND SO ON. I LEAVE TO YOU HOW BEST TO PRESENT THIS CASE, BUT I DO BELIEVE THAT A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF THEATRICALS WILL NOT HURT. IF MARCOS WERE TO SUGGEST THAT YOU MEET AGAIN WITH HIS SENIOR OFFICIALS ONCE MORE BEFORE YOU LEAVE, THAT WOULD OF COURSE BE QUITE VALUABLE. YOUR DEPARTURE DATE HAS VALUE HERE IN GETTING SOMETHING MORE OUT OF HIM.

5. I RECOGNIZE THAT HE IS TROUBLED AND SHAKEN BY THE
RECENT GAINS OF AQUINO, AND THAT HE MUST FEEL THAT WE
BEAR SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUSHING HIM INTO THE ACTIONS
WHICH ALLOWED THEM TO OCCUR. BUT HE SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED

TO LEAVE US WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS. HE HAD
WITHIN HIS POWER THE ABILITY TO AVOID THIS PROBLEM, IF
HE HAD ACTED IN 1977. I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THIS MATTER,
BECAUSE IT SEEMS CLEAR NOW THAT AQUINO HAS GREATLY
ENHANCED HIS STATURE AND THAT WE WILL BE BLAMED FOR IT.
VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEGOTIATIONS, MILITARY BASES, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE078165
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RHOLBROOKE:KA
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840176-1363, N780004-0017
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780322/aaaaascp.tel
Line Count: 126
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4db512bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 78 MANILA 4723
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3194504
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PHILIPPINE BASE NEGOTIATIONS
TAGS: MARR, RP, US, (MARCOS, FERDINAND), (AQUINO, BEGNINO)
To: MANILA WHITE HOUSE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4db512bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014